

Monroe County's Seneca Park

Trail Information

Olmsted Trail South

This trail is an easy 0.7 mile walk over gently rolling terrain. A highlight of this trail is the pedestrian bridge across from the playground parking lot. About half way over the bridge you can view the gorge and the Genesee River. Looking south, you can see the Veteran's Memorial Bridge. Looking north towards the lake is the Kodak research complex and distant views towards the lake. The staghorn sumac, oak, maple and hickory trees and views of the gorge make this a spectacular fall hike. In late winter look for the witch-hazel shrubs that bloom before the leaves come out, along the gorge side of the trail.

Another highlight of this trail is the Seneca Park Zoo, just to the east of the trail. As you pass the yellow gate you will enter woods of maple, hop hornbeam, oak, hawthorn and locust trees, as well as buckthorn and fragrant sumac shrubs.

Please do not try to descend to the river. These are not maintained trails and are considered dangerous. Three trails lead down to the river on the Olmsted Trail North.

Gorge Overlook Trail

This is an easy 0.1 mile walk over level terrain. Seneca Park was designed by Frederick Law Olmsted so visitors traveling in horses and carriages or walking along the drive or on adjacent paths would have views of the gorge. When the park opened in the early 1890's, people wondered if it would get much use because it was considered remote and few people had horses and carriages.

The highlight of this trail is the Trout Pond to the east of the trail, named because at one time it was stocked with California brown trout. Here you can sit on a bench and imagine yourself back in the early 1900's, when you could take a swan boat ride on the pond for 3 cents for a child and 10 cents for an adult, or be content to watch the mini-yacht boat races. There was a bird aviary on the east side of the pond with Mongolian pheasants. Or on a warm summer evening huge crowds came to hear the musical concerts and see the pond ringed with Japanese lanterns. The pond is still a tranquil and beautiful spot, so linger and enjoy yourself.

Olmsted Trail North

This is an easy to moderate 1.0 mile walk with three optional descents to the river. This portion of the trail was what Olmsted referred to as the wilderness section of the park. There are benches and picnic tables along the way to encourage you to stop and enjoy the views.

The highlights of this section are the trails that descend to the river. The trail down to the first dock is just behind the Wegman building parking lot. This is the steepest and longest descent but also the most beautiful. There are stairs and a railing to make it easier. At the bottom of the stairs is a wooden boardwalk that passes through a marsh area filled with wildflowers such as jewelweed, Joe-Pye-weed, purple looses-trife, boneset and cattails in late summer. At the end of the boardwalk is a dock and great views of the gorge. It is especially beautiful in the autumn and on a clear night. In spring, songs of a variety of frogs and toads abound.

The second trail to the river is "Olmsted's Landing". This is a shorter and easier descent with stairs and a railing. Be sure to stop and read Olmsted's philosophy of parks on the sign just before the descent.

As you continue your walk north, you begin to get the feeling of wilderness. The sassafras, hickory (including shagbark), maple, and oak trees, as well as the views of the gorge make this a spectacular fall hike. Can you find the horsechestnut trees in this section?

The third and final trail to the river is a gradual descent on a dirt path. Similar to the first trail to the river, this trail has a boardwalk that passes through a marsh area with a variety of late summer wildflowers and cattails. The cattails have started to grow past the dock, so distant views on the river are limited.

You can return the way you came, or choose the dirt roadway to the east of the trail as an alternative route. If you choose the roadway, there are inner and outer U-shaped trails that lead through the woods and connect back to the roadway. The roadway will take you behind the labor center and to the Wegman building parking lot.

If you have rented a Shelter...

A park guard will stop by to check your permit.

Seneca Park Hours and Rules

Seneca Park is open from 6:00 a.m. until 11:00 p.m. May 15 through October 15 and closes at dusk October 16-May 14. The shelters are reserved by calling 256-4950 and are available from 10:00 a.m. to 10:45 p.m. daily May 15 through October 15. Our County Parks are **Carry-In Carry-Out**. Please take all garbage with you to dispose of after you leave. Keg Beer is permitted if stamped on your rental permit. Recreation fields are available on a first come / first serve basis if the fields are not in league use. **Pets must be leashed. Bicycles are not allowed on trails.**

Trails are multiple use, unless noted otherwise. Enjoy walking, running, horseback riding and cross-country skiing. Please be aware of seasonal changes in trail conditions and be prepared for natural environment such as mosquitoes and poison ivy in some areas.

Seneca Park Zoo

The Seneca Park Zoo is open everyday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Admission fees & zoo Information can be obtained 24 hours a day by calling 467-Wild.



Jack Doyle
County Executive

MONROE COUNTY'S SENECA PARK

LEGEND

- | | |
|-------------|-------------------|
| Shelter | Point of Interest |
| Parking | Park |
| Restroom | Zoo |
| Park Office | Bridge |

TRAILS

- Olmsted Trail North, 1.0 mi.
- Gorge Overlook Trail, 0.1 mi.
- Olmsted Trail South, 0.7 mi.
- Trailhead

